Request for raising the strength of the Home Guards

3020. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the request of the Government of Karnataka seeking the Centre's approval for raising the strength of the Home Guards in the State from the present level of about 17,700 to 25,000 on account of the law and order problem and the frequent demand for deployment of a large number of Home Guards by the Police is pending with the Central Government since 1995; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) Home Guards being a voluntary organization, are governed by the Home Guards Acts and rules of their respective States/Union Territories. Central Government has only an assisting role in providing limited logistic and financial support to States/UTs for maintaining of Home Guards upto a specific maximum strength for each State/UT. The proposal received from Government of Karnataka in 1995 for raising the Home Guards strength from 18,700 to 25,000 was returned as proposed limit exceeded the specified target strength. The target strength of Home guards for Karnataka has recently been revised from earlier strength of 18,700 to 21,700.

Re-opening of road to China

3021. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has conceded to the reopening of the historic stilwell road that links Assam to old Burma Road and onwards to Kunming in China;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware of the fact that this road passes through areas which are part of our security concerns; and

(c) if so, the precautions the Government proposes to take?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) No decision has been taken on reopening of the old Stilwell road connecting North Eastern States with Myanmar and China. the Government is aware of economic, security and strategic considerations involved in the matter.